

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### **HINCHEY OFFERS AMENDMENT TO RESTORE EPA ENFORCEMENT FUNDING**

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today offered an amendment to a federal spending bill to restore the \$25 million enforcement budget cuts proposed by the Bush Administration for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Hinchey cited the negative effects that New Yorkers in particular would suffer from these cuts.

"President Bush wants to leave enforcement up to the states," Hinchey said. "But much of the pollution New Yorkers suffer from comes in from other states. Federal enforcement is the only way to protect New Yorkers from this imported pollution. There are simply some environmental enforcement problems that can only be handled at the federal level."

"Enforcement is the only EPA program singled out by the Bush Administration for deep staff cuts. These cutbacks are a deliberate attack on EPA's ability to see that environmental laws are obeyed. In this post-Enron world, we know that federal oversight is essential. Polluters must be held accountable because self-regulation does not work."

The administration has proposed significant cuts to the EPA enforcement budget that would result in a loss of 210 full-time staff positions -- a 13% reduction in the workforce that provides compliance incentives, monitoring and civil enforcement. Earlier this week, the Appropriations Subcommittee for Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency partially restored 88 full-time employees to EPA's enforcement office in fiscal year 2003.

Today the full Appropriations Committee met to complete work on the bill. A member of the committee, Hinchey offered an amendment to ensure that the 210 enforcement personnel targeted for elimination by the administration are preserved. The amendment failed on a voice vote.